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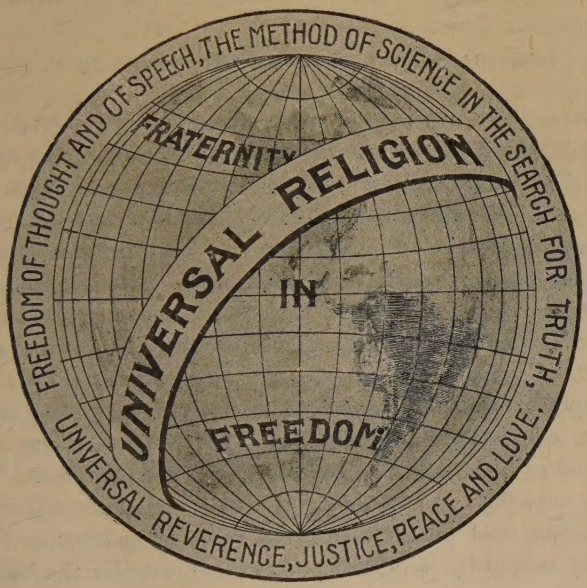
FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND OF SPEECH, THE METHOD OF SCIENCE IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH,
FRATERNITY
UNIVERSAL RELIGION
IN
FREEDOM
UNIVERSAL REVERENCE, JUSTICE, PEACE AND LOVE.

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THE MODERN POETS AS APOSTLES OF LIBERALISM.*

BY JOHN ARTHUR,
Vice-president of the Seattle Society for Universal Religion.

I am to discourse to you upon the services rendered by the modern poets to the cause of liberalism in religion. "In the higher poetry," says the bard of Rydal Mount, "an enlightened critic looks for a reflection of the wisdom of the heart and the grandeur of the imagination. * * * Poetry is most just to its own divine origin when it administers the comforts and breathes the spirit of religion. * * * The concerns of religion refer to indefinite objects, and are too weighty for the mind to support them without relieving itself by resting a great part of the burden upon words and symbols. The commerce between man and his Maker cannot be carried on but by a process where much is represented in little, and the Infinite Being accommodates Himself to a finite capacity. In all this may be perceived the affinities between religion and poetry:—between religion making up the deficiencies of reason by faith, and poetry passionate for the instruction of reason."

Lord Bacon expresses the same idea more concisely in saying that poetry has "something divine in it." "What the poet has to cultivate above all things," says Leigh Hunt, "is love and truth. * * * A true poet is by nature a metaphysician; far greater in general than metaphysicians professed. He feels instinctively what the others get at by long searching"

Poetry is the form of literature which is most strongly impressed upon our youthful fancy, and which lingers longest in our memory; it is therefore the most influential in forming our ideas and inspiring our sentiments. When possessed by strong emo-

*Address delivered before the First Free Church of Tacoma and the Seattle Society for Universal Religion, Feb. 23rd and March 9th, 1902.

tions, or when appealing for liberty, for independence, for justice, or for right, we turn invariably to the poets for the fittest and most effective expression of our feelings. In the agonizing troubles of our civil war, Abraham Lincoln used to seek relief for his weary heart and brain in his favorite poem,

"Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

Living in a land of freedom, whose supreme law forbids the establishment of any religion by the state, and in an age when the theological tenets of our forefathers are, under the influence of that freedom, vanishing from our minds like the mist before the morning sun, it requires a special effort for us to realize what infinite misery those tenets inflicted upon mankind in the days of their prevalence, and how slow and painful the process of emancipation from them. It is one hundred and thirteen years since the constitution of the United States, which prohibits congress from making a state religion or interfering with the free exercise of their religion by the people, was adopted. We might reasonably have expected the other governments of the Christian world to follow so good an example and to sever all connection between the church and the state. Not one of them has done so. Even in the French republic, which approaches the American standard of freedom more closely than any other nation in the world, the ministers of religion are paid their salaries out of the public funds. So little effect has our example of a free church in a free state had upon England, that the church of Henry the Eighth is not only still supported from the public taxes, but its bishops still hold their seats and cast their votes in the House of Lords, and stoutly and persistently, as a solid phalanx, oppose every measure of reform and of progress. In the United States we merely require our president, when entering upon the duties of his office, to take an oath that he will support the constitution and take care that the laws be faithfully executed; in England, as we saw in the first month of the first year of the twentieth century, the king, in the declaration or oath which he has to take on his accession to the English throne, denounces the religion of his millions of Roman Catholic subjects as idolatry; whilst in his oath to uphold the Scotch establishment he denounces and repudiates the English plan of church government by bishops, and declares:

"That prelacy and the superiority of any office in the church above presbyters is and hath been a great and unsupportable grievance and trouble to this nation, and contrary to the inclinations of the generality of the people ever since the reformation, they having reformed from popery by presbyters, and, therefore, ought to be abolished."

The English Catholics, comprising a large proportion of the aristocracy, having raised an outcry against the royal declaration that their doctrine of transubstantiation—namely, that in the holy communion the elements of bread and wine are, by the ceremony of consecration, mysteriously changed into the substance of Christ's body and blood—as being "superstitious and idolatrous," and having demanded that this "declaration against our Lord Jesus Christ," as they characterize it, be eliminated from the test act passed in the reign of Charles the Second, the Council of the Imperial Protestan Federation, which represents twenty-seven Protestant associations in England, Scotland and Ireland, strongly objects to any modification of this theological pronunciamento, and insists upon the continued recognition in the royal oath of the true reformed doctrine of consubstantiation—namely, that instead of the bread and wine being changed into the body and blood of Christ, the body and blood of Christ are, after the consecration, substantially present with the substance of the bread and wine.

I am sure that there is not a man or woman in this audience who does not regard these two doctrines as equally superstitious and idolatrous, and who does not consider consubstantiation as deep in the theological mud as transubstantiation is in the theological mire. Seventy-six years ago Thomas Moore, setting himself up as the poetic interpreter of "The Petition of the Orangemen of Ireland," took a hand in the controversy then raging between the adherents of these doctrines; and I must give you, in part, his version of the consubstantiation men's petition to England:

"To the people of England, the humble petition
Of Ireland's disconsolate Orangemen, showing
That sad, very sad, is our present condition:—
Our jobbing all gone, and our noble selves going:—

That, forming one-seventh, within a few fractions,
Of Ireland's seven millions of hot heads and hearts,
We hold it the basest of all base transactions
To keep us from murdering the other six parts:—

That, as to laws made for the good of the many,
We humbly suggest there is nothing less true;
As all human laws (and our own more than any)
Are made *by* and *for* a particular few:—

That much it delights ev'ry true Orange brother,
To see you, in England, such ardor evince,
In discussing *which* sect most tormented the other,
And burned with most gusto some hundred years since:—

That 'tis very well known this devout Irish nation
Has now, for some ages, gone happily on,
Believing in two kinds of substantiation,
One party in *Trans* and the other in *Con;*

That we, your petitioning *Cons*, have, in right
Of the said monosyllables, ravaged the lands,
And embezzled the goods, and annoyed, day and night,
Both the bodies and souls of the sticklers for *Trans:*—

That we trust to Peel, Eldon, and other such sages,
For keeping us still in the same state of mind;
Pretty much as the world used to be in those ages,
When still smaller syllables maddened mankind:—

When the words *ex* and *per* serv'd as well, to annoy
One's neighbors and friends with, as *con* and *trans* now;
And Christians, like Southey, who stickled for *oi*,
Cut the throats of all Christians who stickled for *ou*."

The spectacle of an empire lashing itself into fury over such barren idealities as these rival doctrines was enough to justify Carlyle's biting remark that "England had twenty millions of people —mostly fools."

In Shakespeare's time the religious warfare was carried on by the government against the Catholics, chiefly for political reasons. Queen Elizabeth herself is suspected of having been more of a Catholic than a Protestant; but the necessity of protecting her throne from the claims and the machinations of Mary, Queen of Scots, forced Elizabeth into a war of extermination against the Catholics, in which theological subtleties bore an insignificant part. Shakespeare gives no indication of his own views or preferences. The Catholics persistently claim that he belongs to them; that his writings evince such deep knowledge of their doctrines and ritual as could have been acquired only by a member of their communion; and that there is abundant evidence in his family history that he was a loyal son of the mother church. If Bacon wrote the plays, their freedom from all trace of sectarian rancor is quite intelligible; for he was a great genius, a profound philosopher, a man of vast

and varied learning, who must have looked with alternate abhorrence and contempt upon the murderous hostilities carried on by professed Christians against each other. The Shakespeare contribution to liberalism consists in the broad-gauged humanitarianism which distinguishes the great works; and it is immaterial whether the author adhered to the ancient faith or embraced the reformed doctrines.

Whatever doubt there may be as to Shakespeare's religious belief or affiliations, there can be none about Milton's; he was a Puritan of the lofty type—an idealist in religion as in poetry. He threw himself with fiery energy into all the political and religious conflicts and controversies of his time; he became the Latin secretary to the great revolutionary leader, Oliver Cromwell, during the protectorate; and he wrote the greatest religious epic in the English language. As was natural to an idealist, he experienced bitter disappointment at the baseness and the narrowness of his associates in religion; and he has immortalized in verse his conviction that the new Presbyterian parson was more despotic, bigoted and intolerant than his predecessor the old Catholic priest; that, to use his own sonorous language, "Modern Presbyter is old Priest writ large."

Milton regarded religious organization as means to an end—namely, to free and lift up the soul and put it in close communion with the Almighty; and when he found the new ministers engaged in forging iron shackles for the soul instead of aiding in its liberation, he was quick to see that they were frustrating the highest objects of the Reformation. Milton would in our time refuse to be a member of any orthodox church.

Butler, the witty author of "Hudibras," followed Milton in scathing denunciation of the Presbyterian clergy. The scene is laid in the Puritan revolution:

> When civil dudgeon first grew high,
> And men fell out they knew not why;
> When hard words, jealousies, and fears,
> Set folks together by the ears,
> And made them fight, like mad or drunk,
> For dame Religion, as for punk
> (Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
> Though not a man of them knew wherefore);
> When gospel-trumpeter, surrounded
> With long-ear'd rout, to battle sounded;
> And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
> Was beat with fist instead of a stick.

The craze of the time for dialectical subtleties is well portrayed in Sir Hudibras:

He'd run in debt by disputation,
And pay with ratiocination.
* * * * * * * *
For his religion, it was fit
To match his learning and his wit:
'Twas presbyterian true blue;
For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints, whom all men grant
To be the true church militant;
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery;
And prove their doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks;
Call fire, and sword, and desolation,
A godly, thorough reformation,
Which always must be carried on,
And still be doing, never done;
As if religion were intended
For nothing else than to be mended:
A sect whose chief devotion lies
In odd, perverse antipathies;
In falling out with that or this,
And finding something still amiss;
More peevish, cross and splenetic,
Than dog distract or monkey sick;
That with more care keep holy-day
The wrong, than others the right way;
Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to:
Still so perverse and opposite,
As if they worshipped God for spite:
The self-same thing they will abhor
One way, and long another for:
Free-will they one way disavow,
Another, nothing else allow:
All piety consists therein
In them, in other men all sin:
Rather than fail, they will defy
That which they love most tenderly:
Quarrel with minc'd pies and disparage
Their best and dearest friend, plum porridge;
Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
And blaspheme custard through the nose.
The apostles of this fierce religion,
Like Mahomet's, were ass and widgeon
To whom our Knight, by fast instinct
Of wit and temper, was so linkt,
As if hypocrisy and nonsense
Had got the advowson of his conscience.

If Robert Burns had been familiar with "Hudibras," he would probably have looked upon Butler as a greater master in the excori-

ation of the Presbyterian parsons than even Alexander Pope could have been; but it is the lash wielded by the bard of Twickenham that he longed for in his desire to castigate the Scotch Presbyterian parsons of his own day:

> O, Pope! had I thy satire's darts,
> I'd gie the rascals their deserts;
> I'd rip their rotten, hollow hearts,
> And tell aloud
> Their jugglin' hocus-pocus arts
> To cheat the crowd.

Although Pope never touched upon the religious controversies of his time—possibly for the reason that he was in an unpopular minority, being himself a Catholic—he was manifestly an advanced thinker, and he struck the keynote of modern Liberalism more surely and unerringly than any other man of his age. At a time when every ignorant ranter imagined himself to be perfectly familiar with the inmost thoughts and purposes of the Almighty, it was Pope who penned the pregnant words:

> Know then thyself! *presume not* God to scan;
> The proper study of mankind is man.

The same warning against blasphemous presumption — the same appeal for humanity—is grandly expressed in his "Universal Prayer":

> Father of all! in every age,
> In every clime adored,
> By saint, by savage, and by sage,
> Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!
>
> Thou Great First Cause, least understood,
> Who all my sense confined
> To know but this, that Thou art good,
> And that myself am blind;
>
> Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
> To see the good from ill;
> And, binding Nature fast in Fate,
> Left free the human will:
>
> What conscience dictates to be done,
> Or warns me not to do,
> This, teach me more than hell to shun,
> That, more than heaven pursue.
>
> What blessings thy free bounty gives,
> Let me not cast away;
> For God is paid when man receives:
> T' enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge thy foe.

If I am right, thy grace impart,
Still in the right to stay:
If I am wrong, O teach my heart
To find that better way.

Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's wo,
To hide the fault I see:
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by thy breath;
O lead me, wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death.

This day, be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,
And let thy will be done.

To thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies!
One chorus let all Being raise!
All Nature's incense rise!

The pantheism expressed in the closing lines of this prayer is re-echoed by another great poet, Lord Byron, who adopts some of the very words of this stanza in a fine outburst of devotional sentiment which was inspired by the historic forest of Ravenna and by the beauful Italian vesper service in which Mary is hailed by all the worshippers as the mother of Jesus and her intercession invoked for all sinners :

Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest thee!

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour,
The time, that clime, the spot, where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,

While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seem'd stirr'd with prayer.

Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of prayer!
Ave Maria! 'tis the hour of love!
Ave Maria! may our spirits dare
Look up to thine and to thy Son's above!
Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!
Those downcast eyes beneath the almighty dove—
What though 'tis but a pictured image?—strike—
That painting is no idol—'tis too like.

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,—
In nameless print,—that I have no devotion;
But set those persons down with me to pray,
And you shall see who has the properest notion
Of getting into heaven the shortest way;
My altars are the mountains and the ocean,
Earth, air, stars, all that springs from the great Whole,
Who hath produced, and will receive the soul.

Although Byron was a member of the British House of Peers, he was a strong democrat. After calling up and reviewing the greatest figures in the history of political and military leadership, and asking if one spotless hero could be found among them, he awarded that laurel to George Washington :

Yes, he—the first, the last, the best,
The Cincinnatus of the West.

Byron's hatred of Wordsworth was due solely to Wordsworth's desertion of the cause of freedom, which made Byron regard him as the Benedict Arnold of poetry, and which brought from Robert Browning that terrible philippic:

THE LOST LEADER.

I.

Just for a handful of silver he left us,
Just for a ribbon to stick in his coat—
Found the one gift of which fortune bereft us,
Lost all the others, she lets us devote;
They, with the gold to give, doled him out silver,
So much was theirs who so little allowed:
How all our copper had gone for his service!
Rags—were they purple, his heart had been proud!
We that had loved him so, followed him, honored him,
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
Made him our pattern to live and to die!
Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
Burns, Shelley, were with us—they watch from their graves!
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

II.

We shall march prospering,—not through his presence;
Songs may inspirit us,—not from his lyre;
Deeds will be done,—while he boasts his quiescence,
Still bidding crouch whom the rest bade aspire;
Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,
One more devil's-triumph and sorrow for angels,
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!
Life's night begins: let him never come back to us!
There would be doubt, hesitation, and pain,
Forced praise on our part—the glimmer of twilight,
Never glad confident morning again!
Best fight on well, for we taught him—strike gallantly,
Menace our heart ere we master his own;
Then let him receive the new knowledge and wait us,
Pardoned in heaven, the first by the throne!

[*To be concluded*]

SELF-SANCTIFICATION.*

BY ALFRED W. MARTIN

"For their sakes I sanctify myself."—John xvii. 19.

Ours is an age of social service, an age in which religion itself gets vital significance only as it finds expression in beneficent activity; an age in which religion is interpreted in terms of practical philanthropy rather than of ritual, rite, or creed; an age in which faith and love are no more tested by verbal confessions but by practical deeds alone. To-day serious young men and women are asking not "can I be saved, do I believe," but "what can I do for others, for those less privileged, less fortunate than I?" In all the various callings of modern life there are men and women who feel the social consciousness stirring them to a sense of personal responsibility for social service. Unprecedented is the number of agencies now in operation aiming at the amelioration of social conditions so that the great ends of human life may be realized by an increasing proportion of the race.

And this spirit that is taking hold of our age and finding manifestation in so many different forms, this growing realization of personal responsibility has been expressed in words transcendently

*A discourse spoken at Tacoma and Seattle, Sunday Nov. 17th 1901 and written after delivery.

simple and fine. They have been ascribed to Jesus and will be found in the nineteenth verse of the seventeenth chapter of the fourth gospel,—"For their sakes I sanctify myself." This sentence has always seemed to me to contain about the noblest thought that human lips can utter, the most comprehensive, embracing all the commonplace experience of mankind. It is certainly the noblest ethical utterance to be found in the New Testament. It is a statement of the supreme duty of man as a member of the social organism. It is a description in tersest form of the solemn obligation which remains on any theory of the universe we may hold. It is a sublime expression of the noblest purpose to which one can dedicate one's life.

According to the author of the fourth gospel, as Jesus sat at supper for the last time with his disciples he offered up a prayer and in the heart of it are these wonderful words, "for their sakes I sanctify myself." What did he mean? He meant that his motive for self-development was not self-centered but altruistic, unselfish, humanitarian, that every man's primary motive and resolve should be to serve, to help, and that the best way to render social service is to cultivate himself. Self-evolution for the sake of self-devotion to society is the modern statement of the moral law for man, and it is precisely this that Jesus meant by those wonderful words. What is it to sanctify oneself? To many the phrase has an odious sound, suggesting something unnatural and therefore undesirable. But this is due to a misconception. To sanctify one's self does not mean to become sanctimonious, to put on pious airs, to adopt asceticism, to enter a monastery, or retire to the desert. The word sanctify is derived from the Latin sanctus, which means "holy," and this, in turn, is equivalent to "whole," the entire man purified, of one spiritual piece; to sanctify oneself is to become whole. And how is this done? First, by taking, not an ordinary, but the highest possible view of ourselves, namely, as children of the Infinite and Eternal Power, "whence," as Herbert Spencer tells us, "ALL things proceed." Second, by devoting our minds to finding and our wills to obeying the laws of this Power. Thirdly, as children of this Power that makes for righteousness and beauty and truth, to co-operate with this parent Power, taking our share of personal responsibility in the eternal task of realizing the ideal, by making our lives

serviceful. Whosoever looks on his life from this high standpoint gives it dignity, grace, grandeur, value; he takes a view of his life that is as inspiring as it is comfort-creating.

Of all the aims and motives that have come down to us from the past none is more satisfying than this, self-sanctification, or self-evolution for the sake of self-devotion; being one's best, not for one's own sake but for the world. Herein we have an epitome of life's mission, a law of life for you and for me and whosoever makes it the law of his life neglects neither himself nor his fellows, becomes neither a self-centred cultivator of himself nor a wasteful benefactor of his brethren. We can, we must help our fellow men and the best way to help them is by becoming the best possible kind of men and women ourselves.

The story is told of a laborer at work on a building whose pinnacles were to soar far into the sky. He dreams of the stateliness of the structure, speculates on its final altitude, compares it with other splendid buildings abroad of which he has heard and read; yet all the while he is cramming a defective stone into the building where he is at work. So there are men and women at work on the great temple of humanity, from whose walls wrong is banished and where justice and love preside. They dream of this social ideal, speculate on the time it will take for its realization, compare it with other states in other lands and earlier ages, yet all the while they are cramming the stone of a selfish life into the great temple where they are at work. By all means let us keep on dreaming of the social ideal, for unless one's soul dwells in Utopia life is not worth the keeping. We need these dreams for inspiration, but let us see to it that we put a clean, honest, unselfish life into the structure just where we are now at work.

If you want to know whether your life is worth anything or not ask yourself the question, am I cultivating the higher self, and if so, what for? That question must come home to every one of us because our age is asking what is going to save the world that so needs saving, because mixed with all the good is so much evil, how are we to meet its pressing problems, relieve its miseries, fulfill its hopes, realize its ideals? That personal question, moreover, must come home with special force to us who have signed the membership roll of this Society, thereby pledging ourselves to help on "the

realization of the highest moral ideal of humanity, both in the individual and in society." It is for us of this Society to give our answer to these burning questions of the age. You ask, "what can I do?" I answer, you can furnish one pure, honest, noble helpful life, a life so serviceful that this world shall be richer because you have lived in it. But you reply, "I do not count, I am too insignificant to count, mine is an inconspicuous isolated sequestered life, how can I count in so gigantic a work as world-redemption?" My answer is, in the Infinite eye there can be no such thing as an insignificant life. Taken by itself, apart from all other persons, your life may seem insignificant enough, but seen in relation to the universal plan of the Infinite Power every individual life is a trusted agent of the Most High. You are not much, you have not much, but little as it is it is essential. The lighthouse-keeper sits in solitude on the lonely rock watching his little flame. Why does he not let it go out as other lights in the distance go out when the night is far spent? Because it is not his light. He is its keeper, not its owner. The great invisible superintendent of that dangerous coast has placed him there and he must be true to his trust. So with your calling in life and mine. It gets significance, dignity, worth if we accept it as a post of honor and trust. Unimportant as any life and work may seem it gets significance the moment it is regarded with reference to its place in the Divine order and ongoing of the universe. And the most miserable moment in a man's life must be that in which he finds he has been trusted to do his little part and been unfaithful.

In his famous address at the founding of Johns Hopkins University, Huxley said, "A great future awaits America. Yet the one condition of her success, and her sole safeguard, is the moral worth of her individual citizens." Whosoever lives with that thought in his soul is the true patriot, a higher type of patriot than the man who is willing only to die for his country. The fate of a nation depends at last, not on kings or parliaments or legislatures, but on the lives and characters of the individual men and women composing it. Nations stand, not on dollars, not on armies, but on righteousness and truth, and if unrighteousness be rampant in a nation not all its dollars nor armies can save it. So then, you and I do count, and the only difference is that we may count for those

influences that help to build up man on the earth or for those that undo and weaken him. The one great influence to be drawn from the story of man's evolution is that the race will reach a human type as far above ours as ours is above that of the Bushman or primitive savage. Every step which the individual man or woman takes toward this goal is a step won for humanity. The future rests with us. Evolution is no magic self-operating redeeming force as some seem to think. Evolution, like Providence, is meaningless in the realm of human affairs, apart from men. The task of the twentieth century is to carry on evolutionary progress, to carry the man of the present on from the bush-man of the past to the God-man of the future. Are we taking a hand in this task? Are we transmitting a better heritage of body and soul to our children than our fathers transmitted to us? Is the coming age to gain or lose through us?

The lawyer may not be able to purify his profession, but he can be a pure member of it. The merchant may not be able to stop the vicious practices of trade, but he can be an honest merchant. The mother may not be able to support the shallow standards of life that bewitch her daughters, but she can pitch the key of her own life so high as to rebuke those standards and rob them of their seductive witchery. The father may not be able to keep his sons safe from temptation, but he can set a pattern himself of temperance and virtue which his boys are more likely to copy from him than from anyone else. In every such case 'tis a question of personal responsibility, of willingness to sanctify oneself for their sake. How the whole practical philosophy of life is summarized in that phrase and how simple its application is! Suppose you are thinking of doing some great wrong, committing some sin that will stain your soul indelibly and leave its damning influence on others besides. What will restrain you from committing that sin? It may be that the thought of its consequences will deter you, the thought that sin does not end with the sinner. Or it may be the thought of the glory, physical, moral, spiritual that will be yours if you resist the evil impulse. Again it may be the thought of the utter vileness of the sin, creating an abhorrence of it and causing your nature to shrink from it as from something loathsome and corrupting. Any one of these reasons for refraining is a good

and strong reason and well may we feel thankful for them all because in our human weakness we need every power and influence that can strengthen us. But what if there should come to you the thought that if you do not commit this sin then the sum of sin in the world will be less, the sum of temptation less, the sum of future evil less because temptation is less. If that higher appeal, if that noblest impulse should come to you and possess you you would say, I will not sin, I will be honest, sober, pure, virtuous at least to-day; for their sakes I will sanctify myself.

Nothing is so terrible to contemplate as the power of a sin done years ago. We may have repented long ago but the consequences of the sin have gone on beyond our reach. Ten years ago a merchant taught his office boy his first mercantile lie and lowered the standard of that youth. Doubtless the merchant has repented of his sin. But what has become of that boy? He has passed out of sight, out of reach. Somewhere in the great multitudinous mass of humanity, that boy is sinning, perhaps duplicating and reduplicating the original sin of the merchant. Five years ago a young man wronged a young woman. She has long since passed out of his life and he has repented in sack-cloth and ashes and has become pure again. But what has become of the ruined woman that he sent away from him? He cannot reach her, he does not know where she is and the consequences of his sin he cannot annul.

Yet let us not forget to reverse the shield of fate and read the inscription on the other side. Every trifling kindly service leaves its beneficent influence on the receiver and on ourselves and multiplies its beneficence indefinitely. Ten years ago you strengthened a boy's faith in human goodness or fixed a young man's purpose to lead a virtuous life and that service has since ramified in countless directions and multiplied beyond computation the world's stock of good.

How absurd then is the notion that we insignificant inconspicuous people do not count. Let the aspiration of Jesus be ours. Sanctify thyself, thou art an arc in the great circle of humanity and without thine arc of service, however small, the great circle remains incomplete. And in so doing we must be patient, remembering that centuries must elapse before the ideal race can be evolved, that "evolution is God's own religion, His calm, patient, tireless pursuit of His own infinite ideal". And only as we enter into that consecration which is His do we become in any deep sense divine and prove our at-one-ment with Him.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD.

TACOMA.

During Mr. Martin's absence on a lecturing tour for the benefit of the First Free Church of Tacoma, Sunday discourses were delivered as follows: Feb. 23rd, Hon. John W. Pratt, of Seattle, "The historical basis of Jesus." March 2nd, Rabbi Joseph, of Seattle, "Current faults and fallacies corrected." March 9th, Hon. John Arthur, of Seattle, "The modern poets as apostles of Liberalism." March 16th, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, of Portland, Oregon, "Persecution and Tolerance." March 23rd, Hon. F. D. Nash, of Tacoma. "Culture and Morals."

On Sunday, March 9th, Mr. Martin addressed the congregation of the oldest Unitarian Church in Boston, "First Church," where the father of O. B. Frothingham was pastor for many years. In the afternoon Mr. Martin spoke at the Arlington Street (Unitarian) church, the church of Channing. On the following Sunday he attended service at the "Independent Church," to which Mr. Samuel Richard Fuller has ministered for the past six years. Mr. Fuller was originally an Episcopalian. Six years ago he found his way out of that Christian denomination into the larger cause of non-sectarian or universal religion, and it is a great tribute to his ability that he has succeeded in creating in Boston an independent church, and discoursing weekly on lines of radical constructive thought to the hundred or more souls who constitute his Sunday congregation. The movement seems ripe for organization. Boston ought to have a thoroughly-organized, strong, active society for the advancement of free, spiritual and universal religion and the nucleus for such should be Mr. Fuller's congregation which hitherto has done nothing but to attend the Sunday services conducted by him in Pierce Hall. Mr, Martin addressed the congregation at the close of the service March 16th, kindling a genuine sense of fellowship as he spoke of the kinship in principles and ideals of the two Socities in the Pacific Northwest and the position of the Independent Church of Boston as indicated by Mr. Fuller's discourses. Nothing, in our judgment, would so strengthen the cause of the new religion as the establishment in Boston of a well organized sister society to the organizations of the Pacific North-

west. May Mr. Fuller and his followers soon find it possible to take this needed forward step.

Mrs. T. O. Abbott, director of the Pansy (Sewing) Club closed her year's work with the children April 19th. Some twenty little girls availed themselves of the privileges of the club during the season. The usual "party" was given by Mrs. Martin at this closing session of the club.

A "council of twenty-five members" is the latest adjunct to the working forces of the church. This council consists of delegates from the various organizations connected with the church and has for its object the promotion of mutual acquaintance among members of the Society and also the recommendation from time to time of measures to the trustees looking to the advancement of the church's interests. The council is to meet monthly and will hold its initial meeting for organization and programme of work May 5th. The board of trustees maintains its executive prerogatives as before but will receive valuable aid in the execution of its purposes from this newly organized advisory body.

The Tacoma Music Hall, which was the auditorium of the First Free Church till larger accommodations became necessary, has been admirably arranged to meet the requirements of a strictly first-class desirable hall for the holding of entertainments, dancing parties, receptions etc. Under the conscientious and judicious management of Mr. R. T. Reid the revenue derived from the rental of the hall has been such as to surprise and delight all who are interested in the growth of the Free Church movement. The increasing audiences at the Tacoma theatre on Sunday mornings furnish gratifying proof of the wisdom there was in moving from the church-auditorium with its seating capacity of but two hundred and fifty. Furthermore, many persons, especially men, are attracted to the theatre who, for various reasons ,never came to the church. All that is now needed is a larger number of seat rentals. Too many there are who contribute only when they come. Pledges of weekly subscriptions with the reservation of a seat is what the trustees desire and require if continued freedom from debt is to be

the privilege of the Society. Mr. Martin reported on his return from the east that the net profits received from his lecturing tour for the mortgage fund amounted to $600.00 It is hoped that $3,000.00 will be raised before Nov. 27th, the date of the tenth anniversary of the church.

SEATTLE.

On his reappearance at Elks' Hall Sunday evening April 6th, Mr. Martin was greeted by a large audience and by a representation (ingeniously devised by Mr. Leo Kohn) of a snowbound train emerging from the bleak and barren wilds of North Dakota into the evergreen valleys of Washington and bringing up at the great totem-pole which stands in Pioneer Square. Beneath this illuminated scene were inscribed the words "Welcome from the Society for Universal Religion." Before beginning his discourse Mr. Martin expressed his great appreciation of the cordial welcome tendered him in so unique a way and invited the audience to inspect the significant design at the close of the meeting.

The Woman's Union, under Mrs. Atkinson's leadership, has held regular meetings fortnightly and is now planning for a social evening May 25th, when the regular Sunday meetings of the Society will be discontinued till September. Mr. Martin expects to meet with the Union regularly once a month during the next season.

Twelve questions from the "question box" were answered at the close of the discourse Sunday, April 27th.

BENTON-HARBOR, MICH.

Mr. A. K. Beem, who was stationed for two months at Whatcom, Wash., decided that the field there was scarcely ripe as yet for the organization of a Free Church, and accordingly returned to Benton Harbor, where a strong and growing church has been established, with Sunday services in the Opera House. The basis of organization is identical with that of the Tacoma and Seattle Societies.

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